

MONTANA STANDARDS FOR MEDIA LITERACY

We have long understood the importance of literacy to becoming productive citizens in a democratic society. In our world of powerful images, sounds and words, students must be media literate. Studies show that students view an average of 3,000 or more hours of television prior to graduation from high school than they spend in class. Media literacy is the tool students need to access, analyze, evaluate and produce communication in a variety of forms. Students need to understand the ways words, images and sounds influence the way meanings are created and shared in our contemporary global society.

Content Standards indicate what students should know, understand and be able to do in a specific content area.

Benchmarks define our expectations for students' knowledge, skills, and abilities along a developmental continuum in each content area. That continuum is focused at three points—the end of grade 4, the end of grade 8 and grade 12.

Content Standard 1—Students recognize that media messages are constructed using specific techniques which manipulate sound, image, text and movement to convey meaning.

Content Standard 2—Students distinguish among and use appropriate types of media for a variety of purposes.

Content Standard 3—Students apply knowledge, skills and strategies to design and create media messages.

Content Standard 4—Students identify, analyze and evaluate the impacts of media on individuals and societies.

Media Literacy Content Standard 1

Students recognize that media messages are constructed using specific techniques which manipulate sound, image, text and movement to convey meaning.

Rationale

Media messages are representations of reality, rather than reality itself, but they affect people in very real ways. In order to understand messages sent through media and their ultimate impact on society, students need to realize that media messages are created with a specific goal or purpose in mind. Each form of media, whether newspaper, television or computer games, has its own unique “language” in which sounds, images, text and movement are manipulated to create the message. When students understand who creates the media messages and how the messages are created, they are less susceptible to manipulation by the media and are better able to enjoy media and use it effectively.

Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
1. recognize that media messages are constructed for specific purposes (e.g., entertain, persuade, inform).	1. analyze how media content are influenced by media form.	1. evaluate and compare how media forms, content, and products are constructed for specific audiences.

Media Literacy Content Standard 2

Students distinguish among and use appropriate types of media for a variety of purposes.

Rationale

As producers and consumers of media, students must select the media most appropriate for their specific needs. For example, some media may be effective for entertaining, but less suited for informing or persuading. Students need to understand the dynamic nature of media and the ways in which media change to adapt to the times so that they will be better able to select the media which suits their purpose most appropriately.

Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
1. recognize and use various media for information, entertainment, and persuasion. 2. identify the way media have changed through history.	1. select and apply appropriate media to a task or topic. 2. compare the historical and cultural differences in media.	1. analyze the appropriateness of various media to specific purposes and audiences and predict outcomes. 2. analyze and evaluate the ways in which one form of media influences other forms and responds to the social and political climate of the times.

Media Literacy Content Standard 3

Students apply knowledge, skills and strategies to design and create media messages.

Rationale

An effective way for students to understand how media messages are created is to design and create their own media messages. While available equipment may vary from school to school, all students can learn to select appropriate media to convey specific messages to specific audiences. They need to understand the techniques and strategies necessary to create effective media messages and how to apply those strategies to their own productions. Equally important, they develop skills to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies selected and make adjustments for future productions.

Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. create age appropriate media messages (e.g., skits, videos, advertisements).2. identify strengths and weaknesses for personal media messages.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. design or create media messages that integrate images, music, sound effects, graphics, etc.2. analyze and evaluate strengths and weaknesses of personal media messages.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. design, create, and display media messages in a variety of forms, targeting different audiences and purposes.2. evaluate the technical and aesthetic appeal of personal media messages, modifying appropriately.

Media Literacy Content Standard 4

Students identify, analyze and evaluate the impacts of media on individuals and societies.

Rationale

Students need to understand the impact that media of all kinds have on our society. They must analyze media to determine the point of view embedded in messages and the accuracy of the message. They must actively evaluate the influence that media have on behaviors, values, and democracy and learn to use media in legal and ethical ways.

Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. recognize that rules and laws exist to govern the use of all media and respond appropriately.2. identify fact, fiction, and opinion in various media messages.3. recognize that all media influence individuals and society.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. analyze the individual and social consequences of unethical use of media.2. analyze point of view and embedded values in media messages.3. illustrate how media influence the way meanings and perception of reality are created and shared.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. assume personal accountability for responsible media use (e.g., adherence to copyright laws, proper attention to citations).2. evaluate the origin, authority, accuracy, bias and distortion of information, and ideas in media.3. analyze media's influence on governmental, social, and cultural norms and their impact on democratic processes.

Media Literacy Performance Standards

The Media Literacy Performance Standards describe students' knowledge, skills, and abilities in the speaking and listening content area on a continuum from kindergarten through grade 12. These descriptions provide a picture or profile of student achievement at four performance levels: advanced, proficient, nearing proficiency and novice.

Advanced: This level denotes superior performance.

Proficient: This level denotes solid academic performance for each benchmark. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter.

Nearing Proficiency: This level denotes that the student has partial mastery or prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficient work at each benchmark.

Novice: This level denotes that the student is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for work at each benchmark.

Grade 4 Media Literacy

Advanced: (1) A fourth-grade student at the advanced level of media literacy demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) consistently recognizes that media messages are constructed;
- (b) effectively creates appropriate media messages and completes detailed evaluation of strengths and weaknesses;
- (c) displays extensive understanding of the use of media for a variety of purposes and the ways media have changed;
- (d) identifies and clearly describes media's influence and rules, and easily distinguishes among fact, fiction and opinion.

Proficient: (1) A fourth-grade student at the proficient level of media literacy demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) recognizes that media messages are constructed;
- (b) creates appropriate media messages and evaluates them for strengths and weaknesses;
- (c) consistently recognizes and uses media for a variety of purposes and identifies the ways media have changed; and
- (d) identifies media's influence and rules, and distinguishes among fact, fiction and opinion.

Nearing Proficiency: (1) A fourth-grade student at the nearing proficiency level of media literacy demonstrates a partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficient media literacy. He/she:

- (a) often recognizes that media messages are constructed;
- (b) creates, with assistance, appropriate media messages, and identifies some strengths and weaknesses;
- (c) sometimes recognizes and uses media for a variety of purposes, and identifies the ways media have changed; and
- (d) recognizes media's influence and rules and, with assistance, distinguishes among fact, fiction and opinion at a limited level.

Novice: (1) A fourth-grade student at the novice level is beginning to attain prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental at each benchmark to media literacy. He/she:

- (a) recognizes, with assistance, that media messages are constructed;
- (b) has difficulty constructing appropriate media messages and rarely identifies strengths and weaknesses;
- (c) recognizes, but seldom uses media for a variety of purposes and has difficulty identifying the ways media have changed; and
- (d) incompletely recognizes media's influence and rules, and seldom distinguishes among fact, fiction and opinion.

Grade 8 Media Literacy

Advanced: (1) An eighth-grade student at the advanced level of media literacy demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) independently and effectively analyzes how media content is influenced by media form;
- (b) flexibly applies appropriate skills and strategies to effectively produce, analyze and evaluate well-developed media messages;
- (c) displays extensive understanding of the historical and cultural differences in media and also consistently selects appropriate media for a task or topic; and
- (d) displays a highly developed understanding of the point of view, consequences and influences of media.

Proficient: (1) An eighth-grade student at the proficient level of media literacy demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) analyzes how media content is influenced by media form;
- (b) applies appropriate skills and strategies to effectively produce, analyze and evaluate media messages;
- (c) compares historical and cultural differences in media and selects appropriate media for a task or topic; and
- (d) displays a complete understanding of the points of view, consequences and influences of media.

Nearing Proficiency: (1) An eighth-grade student at the nearing proficiency level of media literacy demonstrates a partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficient media literacy. He/she:

- (a) recognizes, but incompletely analyzes how media content is influenced by media form;
- (b) sometimes applies appropriate skills and strategies to produce media messages;
- (c) describes historical and cultural differences in media and also often, but not always, selects appropriate media for a task or topic; and
- (d) shows a limited understanding of the points of view, consequences and influences of media.

Novice: (1) An eighth-grade student at the novice level is beginning to attain prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental at each benchmark for media literacy. He/she:

- (a) recognizes how media content is influenced by media form;
- (b) applies, with assistance, a limited range of skills and strategies to produce media messages;
- (c) describes, with assistance, historical and cultural differences in media but has difficulty selecting appropriate media for a task or topic; and
- (d) lacks coherent understanding of the points of view, consequences and influences of media.

Grade 12 Media Literacy

Advanced: (1) A graduating student at the advanced level of media literacy demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) thoroughly and independently evaluates and compares how different media messages are constructed;
- (b) displays originality and ease in creating, critically evaluating, and eagerly modifying the technical and aesthetic aspects of media messages for different audiences and purposes;
- (c) analyzes and evaluates the appropriateness and influences of media at a complex level; and
- (d) is consistently accountable in the ethical use of media, and thoroughly and thoughtfully evaluates media's content, influences and impact.

Proficient: (1) A graduating student at the proficient level of media literacy demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) evaluates and compares how different media messages are constructed;
- (b) creates, evaluates, and modifies the technical and aesthetic aspects of media messages for different audiences and purposes;
- (c) effectively analyzes and evaluates the appropriateness and influences of various media; and
- (d) is accountable in the ethical use of media, and erratically compares and evaluates media's content, influences and impact.

Nearing Proficiency: (1) A graduating student at the nearing proficiency level of media literacy demonstrates a partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficient media literacy. He/she:

- (a) sometimes evaluates and compares how different media messages are constructed;
- (b) creates, but seldom evaluates or modifies the technical and aesthetic aspects of media messages for different audiences and purposes;
- (c) incompletely analyzes and evaluates the appropriateness and influences of various media; and
- (d) is sometimes accountable in the ethical use of media, and sometimes evaluates media's content, influences and impact.

Novice: (1) A graduating student at the novice level is beginning to attain prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental at each benchmark for media literacy. He/she:

- (a) shows limited ability to compare how different media messages are constructed;
- (b) sometimes constructs, but rarely evaluates, or modifies the technical and aesthetic aspects of media messages for different audiences and purposes;
- (c) is beginning to analyze and evaluate the appropriateness and influences of media; and
- (d) is inconsistently accountable in the ethical use of media, and seldom evaluates media's content, influences and impact.